

## **CLAIM AMENDMENTS:**

1. (currently amended) A joint connector-~~(JC)~~, comprising a housing-~~(30)~~ with at least one pair of connecting portions-~~(33, 38)~~ into which mating connectors-~~(10, 20)~~ are fittable, at least one joint terminal-~~(60; 60A-D)~~ having a plurality of terminal pieces ~~(55B)~~ located in both connecting portions-~~(33, 38)~~ and at least one ground terminal-~~(50)~~ having a grounding portion-~~(52)~~ and projecting from the housing at a location spaced from the connecting portions, the ground terminal further having a plurality of terminal pieces ~~(55A)~~ in at least one of the connecting portions-~~(33; 38)~~.

2. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 1, wherein the joint terminal-~~(60; 60A-D)~~ is formed such that the terminal pieces-~~(55B)~~ project from two different lateral edges of a busbar-~~(51)~~.

3. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 1, wherein the ground terminal-~~(50)~~ is formed such that the terminal pieces-~~(55A)~~ project from at least one lateral edge of a busbar-~~(51)~~ having the grounding portion-~~(52)~~ at an end thereof.

4. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 1, wherein the joint terminal-~~(60; 60A-D)~~ and the ground terminal-~~(50)~~ are mounted at different levels in the housing ~~(30)~~.

5. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 1, wherein the joint terminal-~~(60; 60A-D)~~ is mounted into the housing-~~(30)~~ by pressing.

6. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 5, wherein the housing-~~(30)~~ comprises insertion grooves-~~(41)~~ into which at least part of the joint terminal ~~(60)~~ is closely insertable.

7. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 6, wherein press-in holes ~~(43)~~ are provided in the housing ~~(30)~~ for pressing in corresponding terminal pieces ~~(55A; 55B)~~ of the joint terminal ~~(60; 60A-D)~~.

8. (currently amended) A joint connector ~~(JC)~~, comprising:

a housing ~~(30)~~ molded from a resin material and having opposite power and load sides, an intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ between the power and load sides, a power receptacle ~~(33)~~ extending into the power side and to the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~, at least one load receptacle ~~(38)~~ extending into the load side and to the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~, a plurality of press-in holes ~~(43)~~ formed in the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ for providing communication between the power and load receptacles ~~(33, 38)~~;

a grounding terminal ~~(50)~~ having a bus bar (51), a grounding portion projecting from an end of the busbar and a plurality of terminal pieces ~~(55A)~~ projecting from one side of the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar, the grounding terminal ~~(50)~~ being insert molded into the housing ~~(30)~~ so that the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar is substantially surrounded by a unitary matrix of resin in the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ and so that the terminal pieces ~~(55A)~~ project into the at least one load receptacle ~~(38)~~ and so that the grounding portion projects from the housing at a location spaced from the power and load receptacles; and

at least one joint terminal ~~(60; 60A-D)~~ having a ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar and plurality of terminal pieces ~~(55B)~~ projecting from both opposite sides of the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar, the terminal pieces ~~(55B)~~ on one side of the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar being pressed through selected ones of the press-in holes ~~(43)~~ and into the load side receptacle ~~(38)~~.

9. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 8, wherein the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ of the housing ~~(30)~~ comprises insertion grooves ~~(41)~~ facing into the

load side receptacle ~~(33)~~, the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar of the joint terminal ~~(60)~~ being closely received in the insertion groove ~~(41)~~.

10. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 9, wherein at least one press-in hole ~~(43)~~ has no terminal piece ~~(55B)~~ therein.

11. (currently amended) The joint connector of claim 9, wherein the joint terminal ~~(60; 60A-D)~~ and the ground terminal ~~(50)~~ are mounted at different levels in the housing ~~(30)~~.

12. (currently amended) A method of manufacturing a joint connector ~~(JC)~~, comprising:

providing a grounding terminal ~~(50)~~ having a ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar, a plurality of terminal pieces ~~(55A)~~ projecting from one side of the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar and a grounding portion ~~(52)~~ at an end of the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar;

molding a housing ~~(30)~~ from a resin material so that the housing ~~(30)~~ has oppositely facing connecting receptacles ~~(33, 38)~~ separated by an intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ and so that the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar of the grounding terminal ~~(50)~~ is insert molded in the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ with the terminal pieces ~~(55A)~~ projecting into one of the connecting receptacles ~~(38)~~ and so that the grounding portion projects from the housing at a location spaced from the connecting receptacles;

providing at least one joint terminal ~~(60A-D)~~ having a ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar and plurality of terminal pieces ~~(55B)~~ projecting from both opposite sides of the ~~bus bar (51)~~ busbar; and

mounting pressing the joint terminal ~~(60A-D)~~ through the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ so that the terminal pieces ~~(55B)~~ project into both connecting receptacles ~~(33, 38)~~.

13. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of molding the housing ~~(30)~~ comprises forming press-in holes ~~(43)~~ in the intermediate wall ~~(40)~~ at all possible positions for the terminal pieces ~~(55B)~~ of the joint terminal ~~(60A-D)~~.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of providing at least one joint terminal ~~(60A-D)~~ comprises providing a plurality of different joint terminals ~~(60A-D)~~, the method further comprising selecting specified joint terminals ~~(60A-D)~~, and mounting the selected joint terminals ~~(60A-D)~~ in the housing ~~(30)~~ so that the terminal pieces ~~(55A)~~ are press fit through only selected ones of the press-fit holes ~~(43)~~.

15. (canceled).